

U.S. Patent App'n. No. 10/743,960
Am't Dated November 8, 2004
Response to Office Action Mailed June 7, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending, with claim 1 being the sole independent claim. Claims 1 and 3-8 are amended herein, and claims 9-18 are canceled. No new matter has been added.

As a preliminary matter, Applicants submit under separate cover an Information Disclosure Statement and request consideration thereof.

In the Office Action, claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 USC § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,168,757 (Mather et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,488,110 (Price) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,620,321 (Thibodeau). The rejections respectfully are traversed.

The invention according to claim 1 is a cost-effective, manufacturable skid steer vehicle and has as an advantage of allowing skid steering as well as conventional steering. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, at least one drive chain (or drive member) drivingly couples a left-side motor and the left wheels and at least one other drive chain drivingly couples a left side motor and the left wheels such that the left drive member remains in the same orientation relative to the left-side motor and the right drive member remains in the same orientation relative to the right-side motor even as the control arms pivot with respect to the chassis. As a result, the chain does not twist, and a less-expensive, robust chain can be used in the manufacture of the skid steer vehicle.

That having been said, Applicants submit that none of Mather et al., Price and Thibodeau discloses or suggests the combination of at least four vehicle suspensions and at least one steering actuator configured to simultaneously steer the front wheels, wherein the

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left-side motor is drivingly coupled via a left drive member to the two wheels of the left front and the left rear suspensions and the right-side motor is drivingly coupled via a right drive member to the two wheels of the right front and the right rear suspensions *such that the left drive member remains in the same orientation relative to the left-side motor and the right drive member remains in the same orientation relative to the right-side motor even as the control arms pivot with respect to the chassis.* Since this combination is recited in claim 1, Applicants submit that such claim is allowable.

In conclusion, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance, and request early notice thereof.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New Holland, Pennsylvania office by telephone at (717) 355-4954.

Respectfully submitted,



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